



Party Perfect

May 2001

A 'frightening' show

BY KEITH KLARIN

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May 2001

Frightening! That was my first thought when I approached the party equipment section of the 45th Annual A.R.A. Convention and Rental Trade Show in Orlando. It was so big! How could I possibly cover it all in four short days? And I didn't even have to buy. What about the poor souls in general rental who had to shop the entire floor?

Oh well, I gave it my best shot. With the help of my ever-efficient spouse, we were able to get through the entire party section. However, although I encourage even party-only operations to scan the small tools section to find hidden treasures, these old legs just couldn't manage it.

I noticed several trends developing. More and more firms are carrying plastic tables and the prices are coming down. This is most likely due to blow-molding technology. It looks like plastic tables are the future. More and more companies with amusement devices, especially inflatables, are marketing to the industry. This has turned out to be a profitable niche for us.

Everybody, it seems, has chairs, and they're all knocking each other off. Be extremely careful. In my experience in talking to A.R.A. members, chairs seem to be their biggest complaint. If you base your purchases mainly on price, prepare to be stung!

Obviously, space considerations make it impossible to cover every booth. Therefore, the suppliers listed are those with new or innovative offerings. If you saw something that you feel was interesting, but is not mentioned here, contact me via the above toll-free fax number. It may be something I didn't see, but would appreciate learning about, or it may be something I didn't like, and you would appreciate learning why.

Obviously, I can't mention the dogs in print!

3001AD, (800) 605-6703, www.3001adllc.com, specializes in virtual-reality games. These are the type in which you wear electronic goggles and hold joysticks to make you feel like you're actually part of the event. They're great



S & R Sales, (800) 270-7263, is a supplier of sand-art spin art and candle art for company picnics, special events and parties. It also offers a wide assortment of circus music CDs.

Signature Systems, (800) 569-2751, www.signaturefencing.com, known for its attractive portable fencing for crowd control, introduced an arbor made of PVC that breaks down and transports easily. It looks quite sturdy.

Snow Station, (877) 989-7669, www.backyardblizzard.com, gets the prize for the most unique product at the show — a snow-making machine. It's great for holiday parties and promotional events, and surprisingly affordable. I'd love to have one here in Florida in the summer, but, alas, it doesn't work above 28 degrees Fahrenheit.

Special Events Consulting, (800) 621-2495, www.secsalesgroup.com, had a slew of new stuff. The PolarCool evaporative cooling fan is the most attractive and well-built product of its type that I have seen. The company also makes the Roll Seal door that has been adapted for tents. The door rolls up and down electrically and seals itself with Velcro. It is wide enough to drive a truck through. There is a wide line of party and theatrical lights. Its white wood chair is thicker than normal, coated with a high-grade automotive paint, and the screws are all capped.

Special Events Equipment, (630) 871-9999, www.partyrent.com, is another firm formed by party equipment rental people. It had good pricing on wooden folding chairs, plastic folding chairs, ballroom chairs and tables.

Sportogo, (661) 834-3331, exhibited its Dyno Sports line of giant soccer, football and basketball games. This is another amusement that's great for birthday parties, company picnics, etc. The Hydro Bronc water inflatable also looks like a lot of fun.

Supply Side, (800) 768-0078, www.supplyside.com, displayed its new stackable flatware caddy that holds up to 100 pieces. Its moving equipment sure saves a lot of labor.

Tablescapes Designs, (800) 918-6500, another firm owned by rental people, showed its new, contemporary-design wooden banquet chairs with removable, changeable backs. The candle-flame protectors will keep you out of trouble with fire marshals.

Teeco, (888) 350-5187 (fax), showed its tumbler-type washing machine designed specifically for tents. The washing process and the chemicals are gentle, and water temperatures do not exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit. Its large opening make it easy to load and unload. I've been told its service is exceptional.

Ten Strawberry Street, (800) 428-9397, did not disappoint with its selection of elegant china patterns. The all-white Helsinki pattern with textured rim lends distinction to an all-white line. The Gem chargers and leather chargers are unique and attractive. Square dishes are available in white and clear glass. The



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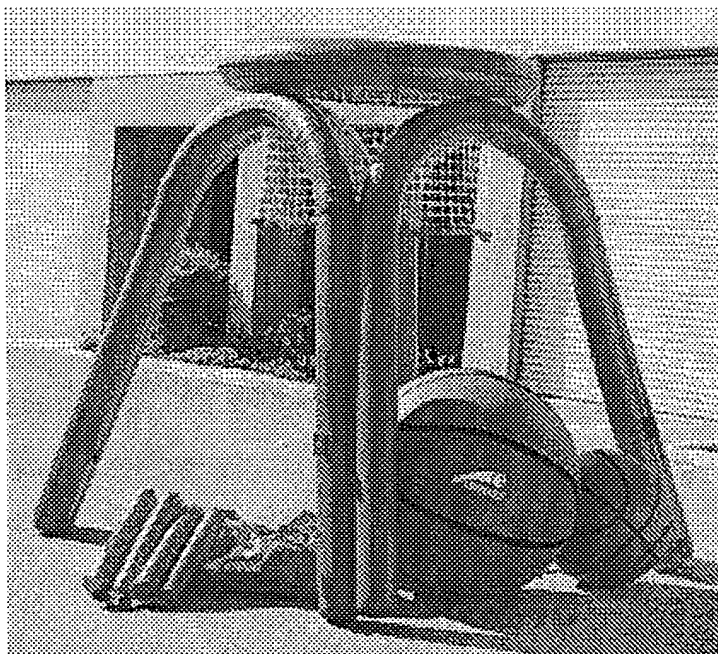
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NEW!

Dyno Basketball

An 8' free standing inflatable goal.

Play a full 360 degrees around the goal. Size of the field and the size of the ball is adaptable to the size you have and the age group playing. The 8' free standing goal is constructed of the same material as used in white water rafts, enabling them to be very rigid and stable. With the use of a standard cageball inflator you can inflate it in less than 15 minutes. And since it is inflatable it is extremely safe if a player runs into a support leg. The complete set includes one goal, one 40" ball, one 24" ball, four fillable ballasts and a set of instructions on how to play Dyno basketball. Other lighter balls such as playground balls or foam balls can be used for younger kids. The excitement this will bring to your classroom is unimaginable-like the product.



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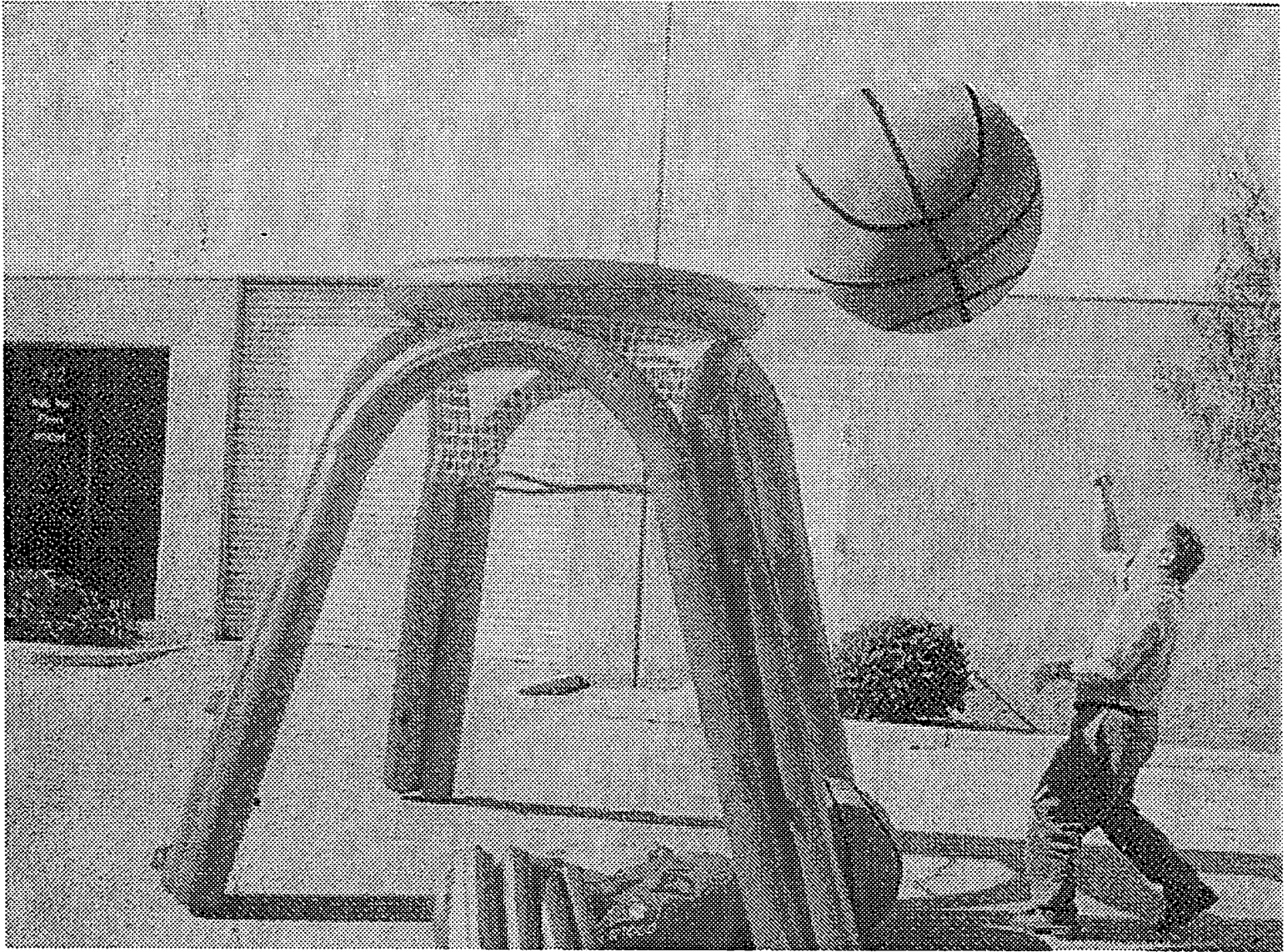


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Scooby Doo Bounce House

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Kids can Jump and tumble around in this inflatable with their old pal Scooby Doo. Fun Services will coordinate this activity.

Super Slide

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Our 23' high x 20' x 30' super slide is a major attraction for any event. Fun for all ages.

Tumbleweed G Force

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Four Guests secure themselves to the seats on the ride. Using the force of their own body weight they begin to rock the ride and are soon rolling head over heels. This ride is designed for two to four riders over the age of 10.

Wacky Car Races

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New for 2002! Ready, Set, Go! These self poowered racers are perfect for all ages. A smooth, flat surface is all that is required to get your participants moving. Great for relay races!

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Sports Attractions and Equipment

Adrenaline Rush

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This attraction commands attention! Your guests race through 11 intense challenges in an 80' run per lane. Participants jump, climb, crawl, squeeze and slide their way through a cacophony of obstacles. This will get your heart pumping! Fun Services will supervise this activity.

Inflatable Climbing Mountain

[Click For Picture](#)

It will take all your strength and agility to scale this wall! This 28' Mountain will challenge all rock climbers in your group as they try to maneuver their way to the top. Fun Services will coordinate this activity.

Bouncy Boxing

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Throw on your oversized boxing gloves and padded gear and knock your opponent out! This attraction is sure to bring laughter to both participants and spectators. Fun Services will supervise this activity.

Bungee Run

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Two guests race down the inflatable runway before the bungee cord snaps them back for a soft landing.

Double Shot Basketball

[Click For Picture](#)

An electronic basketball toss that keeps time and score. An excellent activity for young teenage guests.

Dyno Basketball

[Click For Picture](#)

New for 2002! This gigantic inflatable hoop with 40" ball is sure to entertain all ages. Take your shot and score "big" points!